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Tuesday, January 16, 2018 metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly

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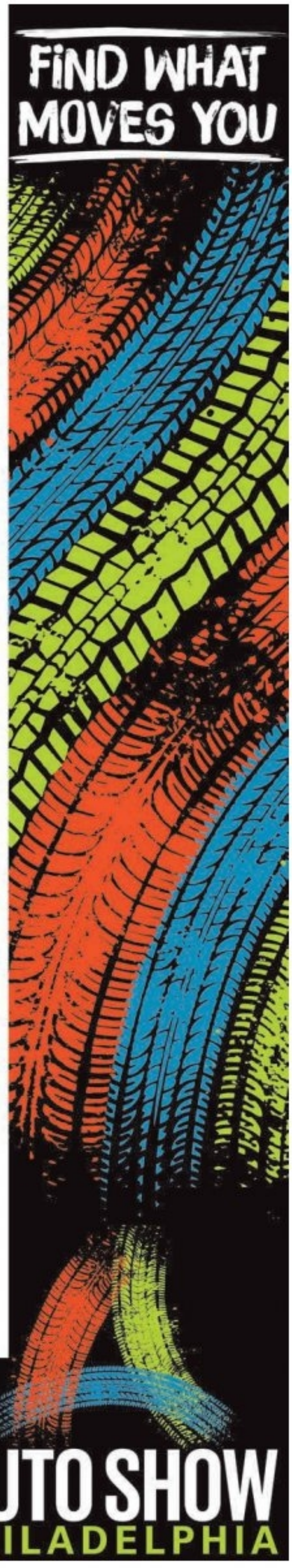
ISTOCK



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SAM NEWHOUSE, REPORTER

Dr. Umar Johnson is riding high on public support after claiming victory before the state's psychology licensing board, which was widely broadcast on social media by Johnson's supporters. But as the controversial Afrocentric thinker and educator tours Asia spreading his message, he's also got plenty of fiery opinions about affairs back home. Plus, he recently trashed the idea of Oprah Winfrey running for president. Read more on page 8 and at **metrophilly.us.**

EU SAYS THAT TRUMP IS LOSING ON TRADE

The European Union's trade czar has no idea what President Donald Trump will say at the World Economic Forum next week, but she is clear what the EU's message will be. America is shooting itself in the foot by withdrawing from global leadership on trade, Cecilia Malmstrom, the Swede who has served as Europe's trade commissioner for the past three years, told Reuters. The retreat of the U.S. under Trump has played a big role in this push, Malmstrom says. Countries around the world are desperate for new trading partners, and the EU, confident after years of economic crisis and Britain's vote in 2016 to leave the bloc, has filled the gap. "We have shown that we have overcome that acute crisis, so many countries are turning to Europe for leadership and for partnership," said Malmstrom.

TRUMP: SEN. DURBIN TO BLAME FOR DEAL FAILURE

2 President Donald Trump on Monday blamed Sen. Dick Durbin for blowing up talks over a deal to help immigrants brought to the country illegally as children and said the Democratic lawmaker misrepresented his comments about Haiti and African countries. "Sen. Dicky Durbin totally misrepresented what was said at the DACA meeting," Trump said in a post on Twitter, referring to the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program that gave legal protection to young immigrants known as "Dreamers." Durbin has said Trump used the term "s—hole" when speaking about Haiti and African countries at the White House meeting about immigration policy last week. "Deals can't get made when there is no trust! Durbin blew DACA and is hurting our military," Trump added.

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

MLK JR. MEMORIAL

3 Martin Luther King III, Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke and others wait to place a wreath during an event at the Martin Luther King Memorial on the National Mall on Monday in Washington, D.C.

GETTY IMAGES

CITI TO RAISE PAY FOR WOMEN AND MINORITIES

4 Citigroup Inc. will increase compensation for women and minorities to bridge pay gaps in the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany, as part of its annual pay process this year, the Wall Street bank said on Monday. As part of the move, Citi also becomes the first big U.S. bank to respond to a shareholder push to analyze and disclose its gender pay gap. Citi said it had conducted a survey in the three countries, where it found that women and minorities are paid only slightly less than their male and non-minority counterparts. On average, Citi found, women and minorities are paid 99 percent of what men and non-minorities are paid, respectively. Compensation would be raised based on the pay gaps identified in the survey, Citi spokeswoman Jennifer Lowney said.

RESCUERS SEARCH FOR VICTIMS OF MUDSLIDES

5 The search for victims of last week's deadly Southern California mudslides pushed into Monday, with hundreds of rescue workers with dogs and scanners hunting for four people still listed as missing after the rain-driven slides that killed 20 people. Emergency officials said hopes were diminishing that they would pull more survivors from the ravaged landscape of hardened muck, boulders and twisted debris left behind by the Tuesday mudslides that scoured a landscape already left barren by last year's record-setting wildfires. "We're still out there with search-and-rescue crews who will continue to work until we can account for those four still missing," Santa Barbara County Fire Department spokeswoman Amber Anderson said in a phone interview.

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Fix Philly: How an unused conference room became the Philly Defenders Hub

SAM NEWHOUSE
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The Defenders Hub started in October 2016 and helps clients find treatment for drug addiction quickly.

Public defenders represent about 70 percent of the criminal defendants in Philadelphia with ongoing cases in the courts, but not every case is a major criminal matter.

"Think about the hundreds of folks going through the CJC — and they're over there right now," said Curt Watkins, chief of adult social services at the Philadelphia Defenders' Association. "Most of those folks aren't there for trials. Most of them are there for violations."

To help clients manage probation and other social issues, the Defenders Association is been offering a holistic approach through the Defenders Hub. Watkins started the Hub in October 2016, using repurposed office space inside Philly's Criminal Justice Center to provide on-site intake for social services.

"Every day the CJC downtown is crowded with hundreds of people dealing with addiction issues," Watkins said. "Why not have, right inside the court, an office that deals with that?"

He said clients in custody can face wait times of up to two months or more for drug treatment. Through the Hub, they can get same- or next-day appointments for treatment. And judges seem to have taken advantage of the alternative: In 2017, 504 clients got services at the Hub.

"I've never had anybody slam the door and walk out," said Erica Berson, a social worker who daily staffs the Hub along with intake workers from various drug treatment programs. "I get them treatment very, very quickly. ... It's a safe space. People can cry if they want to, they can say anything they want. They're not going to be penalized, they're not going to be locked up, I'm going to listen to them."

With a rate of some 40 clients a week in 2017, Watkins said he expects the Hub to "grow and grow and grow and grow."

Watkins said the Hub is a strong argument for a more widespread, social services-oriented approach to problems like drug addiction that have traditionally been treated as criminal matters.

"Just locking folks up on these violations isn't helping, beacuse they're coming back again and again and again," Watkins said. "Relapses are part of the process. ... It's literally because they are struggling with something that took years to come about, and we're only at the beginning of unraveling this."

Curtis Watkins, chief of adult social services at the Philadelphia Defenders Association, inside the Defenders Hub, their offices in the CJC, where clients can get social service and drug treatment referrals. SAM NEWHOUSE

By the numbers

504 clients helped at the Hub in 2017

70% receive substance abuse-treatment related

80% are involved in ongoing cases

Meek Mill

The case of rapper Meek Mill made international headlines after he got a two- to four-year sentence on probation still pending from a 2009 illegal gun possession arrest.

Clients of the Philadelphia Defenders Association can get support dealing with similar violations and trying to avoid prison at the Defenders Hub, room #407 in the CJC, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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Steven Sosna: After 'weather whiplash,' don't fear the snow

SAM NEWHOUSE
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NBC10 meteorologist says flakes won't hit Philly too hard this week.

NBC10 weekend meteorologist Steven Sosna says after Philly experienced "weather whiplash" from recent temperatures, we can expect stable but cool temperatures.

Is Philly done with the historic cold?

The upcoming week won't be nearly as cold as the start of January. While temperatures will remain below the average high of 40 degrees, they won't be painfully cold, either. Look for highs in the lower 30s during the early part of the workweek with afternoon highs reaching the 40s and 50s Friday into the upcoming weekend.

How bad will the snow be?

The snow Tuesday and Wednesday will be of the "nuisance" variety. We're looking at 1-to-2 inches in and around the city, but unlike prior snow systems this winter, the air temperatures won't be as cold. This means road chemicals and salts will work effectively on treated surfaces leaving them just wet. It's the type of snow you can remove with a broom. Two-to-4 inches is possible up across the Lehigh Valley and Poconos, where people make a living off the snow.

Why was there such an abrupt change in temperature after the January thaw?

The thaw took place, and it was a substantial one. This past Thursday (Jan. 11) the high temperature reached 59 degrees, on Friday (Jan. 12) the high temperature reached 64, Saturday's official high was 61 (just after midnight). I would say that's quite a thaw! Unfortunately, it was followed by an arctic blast, but the cold wasn't nearly as impressive this time around as the previous two. It just felt worse because we had 60-degree temperatures prior to it arriving. We've seen temperatures as low as 4 degrees in Philadelphia this month and as high as 64. That's weather whiplash!

Philly is bracing for more snow and cold. GETTY IMAGES

How long will this cold snap last?

This current cold stretch will last through Friday morning. By Friday afternoon, our temperature in Philadelphia should reach 40 or higher, breaking our below average cold stretch. The next upcoming thaw should last several days with temperatures by Sunday and Monday reaching well into the 50s. The chill behind this next round of warmth doesn't look too abrasive either. Real nasty cold may not come back until late January or early February based on the latest trends.

Meteorologist Steven Sosna looks at the week ahead. COURTESY OF NBC/UNIVERSAL

Reach Sosna on Twitter @SteveSosnaNBC.

Are you suffering from Heavy Menstrual Bleeding due to

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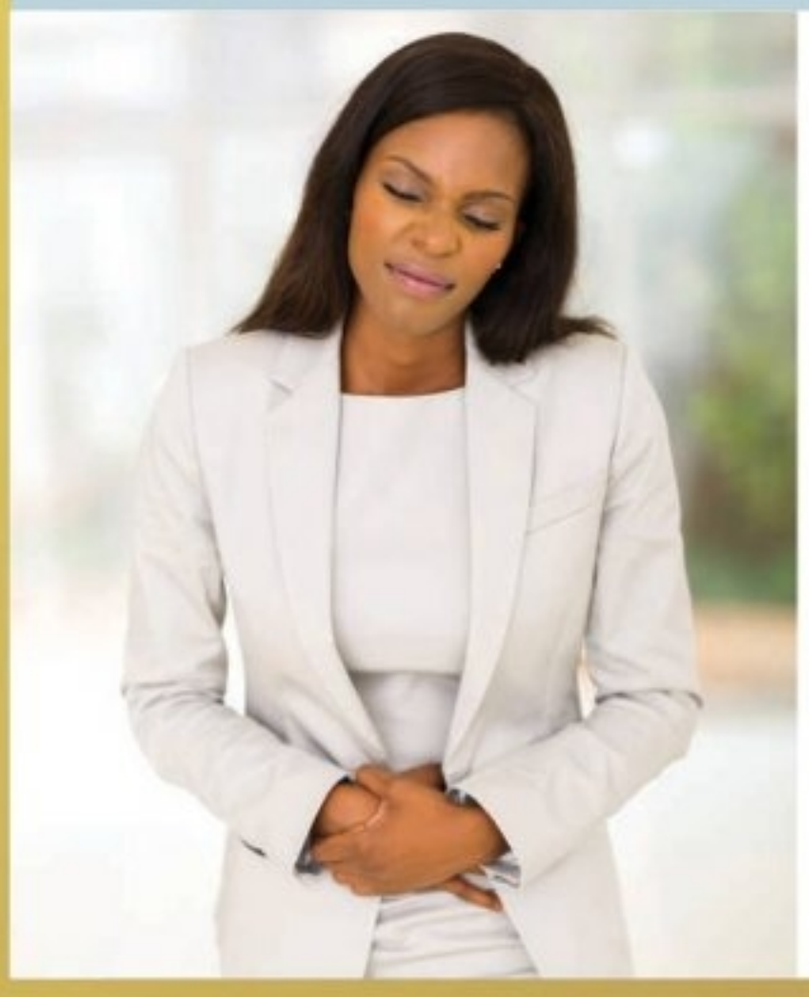

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Oprah has received recent support to run for office. GETTY IMAGES

Black nationalist Umar Johnson bashes Oprah 2020 while touring Asia

SAM NEWHOUSE
sam.newhouse@metro.us

Oprah has support for a possible presidential bid.

Dr. Umar Johnson has been in the spotlight after being ordered to a state psychology board hearing over his licensing, but while that decision is pending Johnson is causing a stir while on a lecture tour in Asia.

The fiery orator, educator and writer, who calls himself the "Prince of pan-Afrikanism," recently took to YouTube to slam the idea of Oprah Winfrey running for president.

"If they do put Oprah in, I believe it is to bring about the permanent demise of the black male," Johnson said in a video posted on YouTube Jan. 11 that had some 50,000 views. "An Oprah Winfrey presidency spells extermination for black men everywhere."

And why would she do that, exactly? It's not Oprah, Johnson says, but the "power structure" that he claims is using "LGBT-ism" and feminism against black males, things he has spoken about recently to his audience of hundreds of thousands on social media.

"If the power structure needs Oprah Winfrey's stature and status and fame and feminism and pro-multiculturalism and LGBTism in order to advance its global agenda," Johnson said in the video, "then Oprah Winfrey will very well be the next president of the U.S."

Winfrey garnered calls to run for president after her recent Golden Globes award acceptance speech. In addition to her massive popularity from decades in media and philanthropy, Winfrey is seen as advocating Democratic liberal ideas that are an antidote to the antics of President Donald Trump.

But Johnson seems to view social changes as concealed mechanisms of racist eugenic programs led by all-powerful conspiracies, not unlike "The X-Files."

Ironically, while Johnson's career is dedicated to Afrocentric and black causes, as in this case, some of his opinions mirror those of white supremacist conspiracy theorists, who make claims that are nearly identical.

Dr. Johnson is an educator and longtime school psychologist based in Philly who has been fundraising for a hypothetical dream school for black children since 2014. (He's advocated extreme rules for the school, such as expelling girls with "unnatural hair.")

He appeared at a state psychology board for a hearing earlier this month over whether he had the appropriate license, but afterward declared victory and maintained that he had never misrepresented himself as a licensed psychologist.

He is on tour in Asia, broadcasting from his Instagram account, which was recently reinstated.

The idea of Oprah Winfrey running for president bothers Philadelphia black nationalist Dr. Umar Johnson. PROVIDED

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TRUMP'S AMERICA: DONALD DIGS HIMSELF ANOTHER HOLE

ELLIS HENICAN

Analysis

A house is not a hole.

That, I kid you not, is the latest defense from Donald Trump's enablers, as most of planet Earth howls in outrage at the American president's vulgar term for nations that aren't as white as Norway.

And Trump's not helping himself much: He spent Martin Luther King Day golfing at his private club in West Palm Beach, ostentatiously ignoring his own call to honor the slain civil-right leader with "acts of civic work and community service." Every other president for the past 24 years — Obama, Bush and Clinton — used the occasion as a "day of service," helping out in soup kitchens, reading to disadvantaged children and the like. On his first MLK Day as president, the only person Donald Trump decided to serve was himself.

His latest time on the links came as he and his remaining defenders — in the White House and the Republican Congress — were still beating back angry accusations of racism, ignited this time by the president's reported use of the term "s—hole countries" to describe Haiti and the nations of Africa. "We should have more people from Norway," he allegedly said when a bipartisan group of senators met to discuss immigration.

The language was confirmed by a Republican senator and a Democratic senator who were in the room, though a wave of sudden deafness — or was it memory loss? — did seem to grip the other Republicans who weren't named Lindsey Graham.

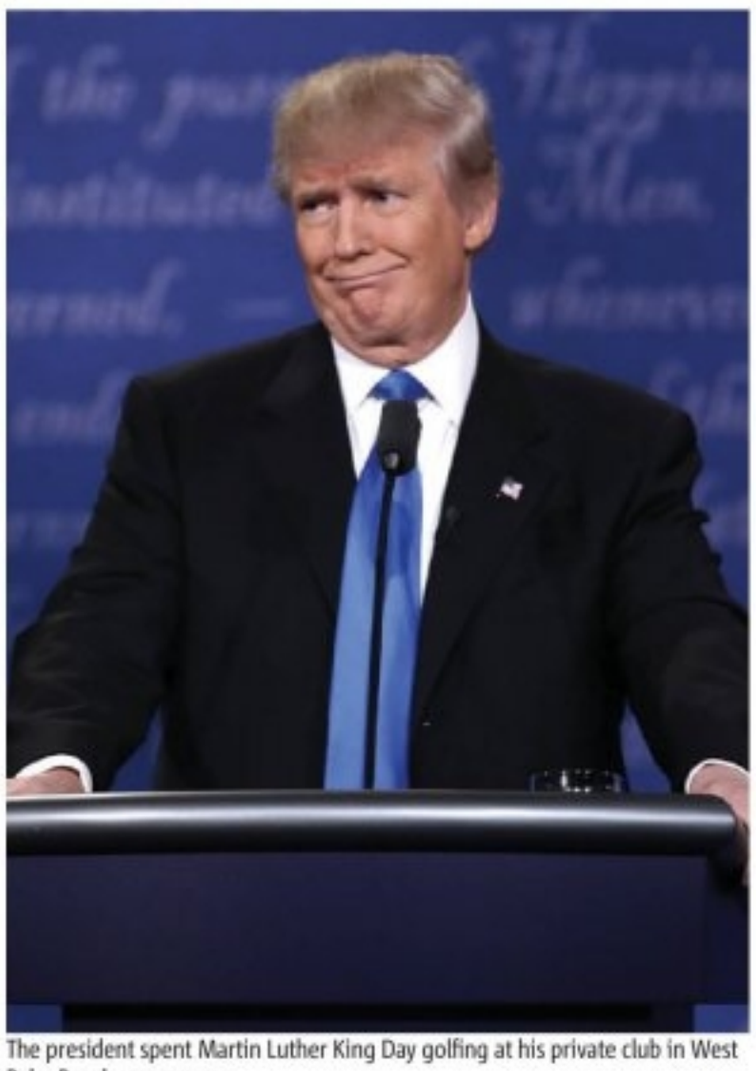
Trump is sticking to his story, of course, shouting back at pool reporters in Florida: "No, no, I'm not a racist. I am the least racist person you have ever interviewed. That I can tell you."

That did nothing to calm the roiling waters, any more than Monday's 18 holes did. And the president's band of helpmates found their final refuge in a language technicality. He didn't call those dark-skinned nations "s—hole countries." He said "s—house countries."

What a poetic defense of a distant land that just so happens to be someone's country! Doesn't it make you want to print up the postcards immediately?

"Donald, wish you were here!"

Metro columnist Ellis Henican is the best-selling author of a dozen books, including "TRUMPITUDE: The Secret Confessions of Donald's Brain." Join him on Twitter @henican.



The president spent Martin Luther King Day golfing at his private club in West Palm Beach. GETTY IMAGES

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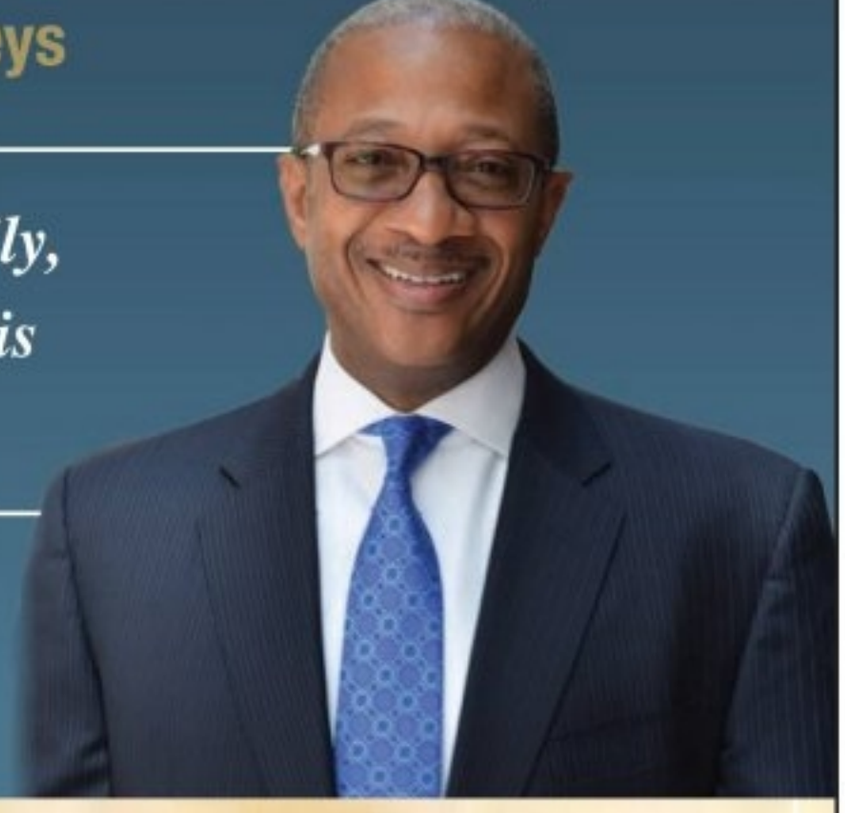

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New poll: Republican satisfaction is at its highest level in years

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More than six in 10 Republicans are satisfied with how things are going in the U.S.

According to a new survey conducted earlier this month, Republican satisfaction with our nation's trajectory is at its highest since 2007.

A Gallup poll found that 61 percent of Republicans — roughly six in 10 — say they are satisfied when asked, "In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in the United States at this time?"

One in four Republicans says they are "very satisfied" with the nation's trajectory, and 36 percent say they are "somewhat satisfied." Twenty-three percent describe themselves as "somewhat dissatisfied," while 15 percent still say they are "very dissatisfied."

As for Democrats, less than 1 percent say they are "very satisfied" and almost 7 in 10 say they are "very dissatisfied."

Back in June, amidst the hearing with former FBI Director James Comey regarding his investigation of potential Russian collusion, GOP satisfaction dropped to 41 percent. This was a 17-point drop from the 58 percent satisfaction rate the month before.

GOP satisfaction reached its lowest in October at 38 percent. As Gallup stated, the GOP gradually became more satisfied in the final quarter of 2017.

This new poll, which surveyed 1,024 adults from Jan. 2 to 7, came after Trump signed his massive tax cut bill and before his massively controversial "s—hole comment" during last Thursday's immigration meeting.

As the Democratic party and African countries voice protest against the remarks — among them, Botswana and South Africa's foreign ministries — few Republicans acknowledged the comments in which he referred to Haiti, El Salvador and some African nations as

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President Trump celebrates tax reform with fellow Republicans. GETTY IMAGES

"s—hole countries."

Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), the only Democrat who was at the meeting, publicly confirmed the comments. "He said these hate-filled things, and he said them repeatedly," Durbin stated to the press.

In a joint statement on Friday from Sens. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) and David Perdue (R-Ga.), who also attended Thursday's meeting, they both said they don't recall the comments allegedly made by Trump: "In regards to Senator Durbin's accusation, we do not recall the president saying these comments specifically but what he did call out was the imbalance in our current immigration system, which does not protect American workers and our national interest."

On Sunday, however, Perdue said on ABC'S "The Week," that he now remembers what occurred at the meeting, and that the president "did not use that word."

"And I'm telling you," Perdue continued to say, "it's a gross misrepresentation."

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Whishaw is eager to re-team with 007.
EON PRODUCTIONS

Ben Whishaw teases James Bond 25 start date

Q is patiently waiting for an update, too.

GREGORY WAKEMAN
gregory.wakeman@metro.us

It's been over two years since the last James Bond film came out. And although "Spectre" was met with middling reviews, it still provided enough spectacle and action to remind moviegoers why the franchise has remained so popular for so long.

Audiences have been waiting with bated breath for news on James Bond 25 for quite some time. Thankfully, over the last few months little bits of information regarding the blockbuster have finally started to emerge.

The most startling revelation came last summer. when Daniel Craig confirmed he would be making his fifth and final appearance as 007 in the yet-to-be-titled film (it was heavily speculated that "Spectre" would mark Craig's farewell).

GETTY IMAGES

We now also know that "James Bond 25" will be written once again by Neal Purvis and Robert Wade, who have contributed to the last six entries to the franchise. And the film will be released on November 8, 2019.

Ben Whishaw — who you may have heard this weekend, reprising the voice of the marmalade loving bear in "Paddington 2" — made his Bond debut as Q in "Skyfall" and reprised his role in "Spectre," too. Whishaw will return as the Quartermaster in the next Bond entry. But when I spoke to the British actor over the weekend, he admitted that he's still not quite sure when production will actually begin.

"I haven't had an update for a while," he says. "I would imagine, I think they have a release date for next year, so I think by the end of this year we have to have started filming something. Although it has gone strangely quiet, but that's often the way it goes."

While we wait for further news on "James Bond 25" make sure you check out Ben Whishaw's hysterical turn in "Paddington 2," in theaters now.

Tiffany Haddish is the new face of Groupon

Give Tiffany Haddish the spotlight and she does not disappoint. The comedian first won us over in her tour-de-force performance in "Girls Trip," for which she won "Best Supporting Actress" at the New York Film Critics Circle awards. The 17-minute acceptance speech she delivered that night is worthy of its own nomination.

She was a hit as a host on "SNL" and in her debut stand-up special on Showtime. But one of her best moments was during the press circuit for "Girls Trip." On "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" Haddish told a story about taking Will Smith and co-star Jada Pinkett Smith on a Groupon swamp tour down in New Orleans and it went viral. Don't think Groupon

Tiffany Haddish is going to the Super Bowl.
GETTY IMAGES

didn't notice. Months later, Haddish has landed a gig as a spokeswoman for the company, starring in a series of upcoming commercials, including a Super Bowl spot, People reports.

In a video announcing the partnership, Haddish lets it be known that swamp sojourn was not her first Groupon experience. "As you know I'm a huge fan of Groupon and have been using them forever," she says. "To eat out, to take my niece everywhere and to get my Groupon body on — you know what I'm saying: personal trainers at a discounted rate."

The data confirms it: Groupon's head of marketing Jon Wild told People that she's actually in the top one percent of the most frequent Groupon users. Get those deals, Tiff.

Wild said much of her upcoming Super Bowl ad will be improvised. "She knows our product better than a lot of Groupon employees, it was incredible," he said. "She could name what she'd done, the experience she had and how much she'd saved."

We can't promise we'll watch the game on Feb. 4, but we'll definitely tune in for the fourth quarter, when Haddish's spot is set to air. We would watch her in literally anything.

KATE MOONEY

Cat Deeley has a bun in the oven

Neat-o.
GETTY IMAGES

Cat Deeley, a woman most famous for hosting "So You Think You Can Dance" and going on a rant about a restaurant one time, is expecting a second kid with her husband, Patrick Kielty. They already share a son, Milo, who was born in 2016.

The 41-year-old broke the news on Twitter, as you do, writing, "Over-the-moon to share that Milo is going to be a big brother! Can't wait to be a family of four in the spring. We're all so excited."

Last summer, the TV host opened up to People about juggling her career with motherhood, and apparently it's really hard! LOL, duh.

"It's crazy busy, and trying to juggle everything is really difficult," she said. "You just have to try and do the very best you can for that day, and then move on to the next day and do the very best you can [then]."

Well, OK. Congrats!

RACHAEL VAUGHAN CLEMMONS

'Black Lightning': The revolution will be televised

The CW takes a bold new direction with its latest superhero series.

MATT JUUL
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Racism, police brutality and other real-world problems usually take a back seat to time-travelling villains and alien invasions on shows like "The Flash" and "Supergirl." But "Black Lightning," The CW's latest superhero series, plans to tackle these injustices head-on.

"Black Lightning" tackles racism and other injustices head on.

While showcasing the complexities of race relations in America may seem out of place on comic-book shows, "Black Lightning" masterfully balances those heavier themes with the superpowered action fans have come to expect from DC Comics' small screen ventures. And although it's fun to watch Jefferson Pierce (Cress Williams) hurl bolts of electricity at bad guys, it's clear that the series hopes to spark a wider conversation around a variety of issues. Not only does "Black Lightning" refuse to shy away from tackling those important topics, but it also offers a glimmer of hope for its viewers with its positive portrayal of a loving African American family.

Case in point? The first episode of "Black Lightning," which debuts Jan. 16, sets a serious tone for the series with a powerful opening scene involving a situation that has become all too familiar for many African-Americans and people of color. Despite being a respected community leader and high school principal, Pierce still gets pulled over and harassed by white police officers during a rainy evening car ride in a disturbingly accurate example of "driving while black."

The series also heavily revolves around Pierce's relationship with his two daughters, Jennifer (China Anne McClain) and Anissa (Nafessa Williams). The later is an avid, lesbian activist who also ends up becoming a hero in her own right known as Thunder.

Williams tells Metro that she hopes her character will become a powerful inspiration for African American women, especially those in the LGBTQ community.

"She's very strong. She comes with a very powerful voice," Williams says. "I believe that young women need to see her, in particular black young women, to have that visual of someone who looks like them.

"Growing up, I didn't have a superhero to look up to who looked like me," she adds. "I have cornrows. You don't really get to see that on TV. I just appreciate the authenticity."

As the first headlining black superhero in DC Comics history, it's only fitting that "Black Lightning" is helping to blaze a new trail for African American heroes on television.

"It's been time for a show like 'Black Lightning,'" Williams says. "It's long overdue. It's necessary. It's needed."

"Black Lightning" airs Tuesdays at 9 p.m. on The CW.

Cress Williams plays Jefferson Pierce, aka Black Lightning, on The CW's latest superhero series.
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4 ways to beat the winter blues in Philly

It's all about balance.

JENNIFER LOGUE
jennifer.logue@metro.us

Have the winter blues gotten you down? With the chill in the air and the incessant snowfall we've been seeing this year, this particular winter has been a tough one. But when you live in a city as vibrant as Philadelphia, there are a bunch of ways to keep the winter blues at bay, from hitting the yoga studio to seeing a musical. Here's what's on our radar to turn those frowns upside down.

Yes it's cold out, but Rittenhouse Square is beautiful any time of year. M. FISCHETTI FOR VISIT PHILADELPHIA

Center District Restaurant Week is here! Enjoy a fabulous meal at restaurants like Veda. PROVIDED

Don't miss out on "Les Miserables" at the Academy of Music. PROVIDED

Start the day off with some yoga.

Don't let stress keep you from finding your center. Before you jump into a busy workweek, wake up a little earlier and do some yoga. Most Philly studios have early bird classes like Yoga Garden's Sunrise Vinyasa at 7 a.m. Have a super-early start to the day? Hit Hot Yoga Philadelphia's 6 a.m. 90-minute class. You'll have plenty of time to get showered and even grab a green juice before rushing off to work.

Treat yourself to a nice lunch or dinner.

Whatever you do, don't eat lunch at your desk — especially if you're feeling blue. Take the time for a change of scenery and some social engagement with work colleagues outside of the office. Center City District Restaurant Week kicked off yesterday and features three-course, $20 lunches at select restaurants. Busy day? Savor a nice three-course dinner for only $35 at restaurants like Veda, aMuse, Buddakan, Davio's and more.

Go for a walk.

Sometimes you need to clear your mind, and going for a walk is a great way to do it, especially considering we live in one of the most walkable cities in the United States. Take a stroll through one of Philly's many parks, like Rittenhouse Square, Washington Square or even along the Schuylkill for a breath of fresh air.

See a musical.

Nothing uplifts the spirit like a musical and the longest running show of all time is playing now through Jan. 21 at the Academy of Music — "Les Miserables." Be swept away by gorgeous music and knowing that no matter what you're going through, life in 19th-century France was pretty rough compared to today.

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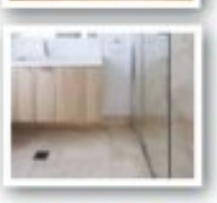

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Parx Casino debuts Xcite Center

Reba McEntire comes to the Xcite Center on April 27 and April 28. PROVIDED

If you're in the mood to see some live entertainment without trekking all the way to the city, the new Xcite Center at Parx Casino in Bensalem may become your new favorite place.

This past Saturday, the $50 million expansion made its debut with an inaugural concert by Grammy-winning band Chicago.

"Parx Casino is thrilled to open a spectacular new live music venue with state-of-the-art sound and technology that will attract America's biggest names in music and comedy," said CEO Tony Ricci. "We set out to build the best entertainment venue of this size in the area."

A number of national acts are scheduled to take the stage at Parx Casino in 2018, including Reba McEntire, Rascal Flatts, Gabriel "Fluffy" Iglesias, Bill Engvall, Paul Rodgers of Bad Company, Eddie Money, Pat Benatar, Wayne Brady, Dane Cook, Third Eye Blind, Dwight Yoakam, The Commodores and Lyle Lovett & Shawn Colvin.

"We'll be continuing to announce more great acts – at and above the level of what has been announced – in the coming months," Ricci adds.

The 30,000 square foot space has 1,500 seats and each one has been designed to give a perfect view of the stage.

Parx Casino is located at 2999 Street Rd. in Bensalem.

For more information and to buy tickets for upcoming shows, visit: parxcasino.com.

JENNIFER LOGUE

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Addiction wreaking havoc? Here's how to help someone you love

seabrook
the heart of recovery

ASK SEABROOK

Stay Healthy

Addiction can take a serious toll on families. Seabrook The Heart of Recovery is an accredited nonprofit that's devoted to treating addiction along with any co-occurring mental health issues. We sat down with Ed Diehl, Seabrook's president, to talk about ways to help a friend or family member caught in the throes of addiction.

Watching someone you love battle addiction can be heartbreaking, and you may feel helpless, but Diehl says it is possible to get on the other side. Seabrook The Heart of Recovery can help.

I'm concerned a family member has a drug or alcohol problem. What can I do?

The idea of confronting the person can be terrifying, especially since they're likely to reject your feelings. Denial and minimization go hand in hand with addiction because, more often than not, the addict is afraid that they really can't stop. Research and experience has shown us again and again that the only thing that really begins to break down those walls are facts. The family should document unacceptable behavior they've witnessed, then present it to their loved one in a way that isn't antagonistic. That's the foundation of an effective intervention.

What else goes into an intervention?

Don't make general accusations or indict their character in any way. Instead, it should feel invitational. "Here's the destructive behavior we see. We love you, but we believe you have a problem and we want to help. We're moving in a healthy direction and want you to come with us."

Education, which is offered in our Family Matrix Program, also goes a long way. If you can get clear on what the problem actually is, you'll feel bolstered and less likely to join in the denial and excuse-making you're going to encounter.

Someone I love is a heroin addict. Is it possible for them to get well?

Treatment works and recovery is possible, but professional help really is crucial because it's very complex; addiction is a difficult illness to treat. Professionals are specially trained in this, and that's what Seabrook offers. We're very successful in working with families to assist in getting their loved ones the help they need.

Is checking into an inpatient center the only way to get better?

This isn't a one-size-fits-all situation. In an ideal scenario, the person would begin with a short-term residential treatment experience, but this isn't always possible. (Most people who are addicted to drugs or alcohol are also battling physical dependency. At our inpatient centers, our detox team can carefully withdraw the substances from the body in a safe setting.) Our outpatient centers represent a different pathway to healing that's a perfect fit for some people. It all depends on the person. Seabrook always begins with a diagnostic evaluation to help the family determine the best course of action.

Serving the community for over four decades, Seabrook The Heart of Recovery has treatment centers across New Jersey in Bridgeton, Cherry Hill, Northfield, Morristown and Shrewsbury. To learn more about their forward-thinking approach to individual and family healing, visit http://Seabrook.org.

MARIANNE HAYES

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Swipe right to ... pay for college?

Dating app Seeking Arrangement helps students connect with "sugar daddies" to make paying for school easier

PAT KING
patrick.king@metro.us

Now here's an interesting way to avoid student loan-debt... ISTOCK

With how expensive college is nowadays, sometimes students have to come up with creative ways to pay for their education. And with the total student debt owed reaching over $1.2 trillion, many new students are doing so in ways that may be considered outside of the box.

In a press release from the online "mutual benefit" forum (AKA sugar daddy Tinder) Seeking Arrangement, it released its ranking of schools with students using its service to find wealthy benefactors to pay for their tuition in return for, well, companionship.

This list broke down which schools had the most new members at the end of 2017, with Arizona State University nabbing the top of the list (352 new students, 1,361 total); Temple University in second (328 new students, 1,201 total); and NYU coming in third (316 new students; 1,529 total).

Seeking Arrangement says the average allowance given to its collegiate sugar babies $2,800 per month.

Regardless of your views on organizations like this one, you have to admit that number is pretty impressive.

But what's the catch?

To be clear, Seeking Arrangement does not force any of its members to exchange anything after meeting people through its site. According to spokesperson Brook Ulrick, the site is doing its best to attract students looking to take advantage of relationships with these kinds of beneficial dynamics.

"We offer students free premium memberships," explains Ulrick. "Sugar babies can actually use the site for free, but we give them updated features and get them featured on the site's dashboard for free, which is paid for if they sign up using their university IDs."

Ulrick stresses that Seeking Arrangement is a dating site, and any compensation paid to a sugar baby from a sugar daddy, or mommy is a by-product of an agreement set up by two consenting adults.

"It's a dating site just like any other, but it is unique in that we want people to talk about the time and the money they want to spend in a relationship beforehand," says Ulrick. "Those expectations are often times financial, but this is a site about relationships on your terms."

Ulrick believes setting up these kinds of couples through only helps everyone involved.

"A lot of sugar daddies like having like having sugar babies in college or university because it shows that they are ambitious," she explains. "It's an investment in their future. So rather than just handing over money or gifts, they are actually investing in this person. Most sugar relationships, whether or not they are seeing each other, their friendships usually last much longer than when the sugar babies are in college. Because there are no traditional relationship expectations, they don't break up, ever. Usually it's just the terms don't work out."

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The Eagles and Vikings will kick off in the NFC Championship Game on Sunday night at 6:40 on Fox. GETTY IMAGES

UNDERDOGS AGAIN, LAS VEGAS DOES EAGLES ANOTHER FAVOR

GLEN MACNOW

OPINION

Glen Macnow has been an outspoken voice in Philly sports for nearly three decades.

Here we go again.

The Eagles were still basking in the afterglow of victory when the Vegas sharpies came through with another motivational slap Sunday night — making the Vikings 3.5-point favorites for next weekend's NFC Championship game in South Philly.

So slip on the German shepherd masks. Cue Alshon Jeffrey's righteous indignation quotes. Someone teach the Pep Band the theme from "Underdog." We've been handed another gift.

This talented team — and its fan base — played the "no one believed in us" mantra to the max on a bone-chilling Saturday, beating the Atlanta Falcons, 15-10. As I wrote last week, Philadelphia is the underdoggiest city in America. The skeptical odds-makers did this town a huge favor.

Of course, the Eagles backed up their resentment through sturdy defense, a bullying offensive line and — yes — positive play from QB Nick Foles. The maligned QB hit 23-for-30 and had a passer rating of 100.1.

Much of the credit goes to the coaches. Doug Pederson called a creative offense Saturday — consider Nelson Agholor's misdirection run that gained 21 yards. And, searching for the best way to help Foles, Pederson time-machined the offense back to 2013, when Foles excelled using Chip Kelly's run-pass options.

Defensive coordinator Jim Schwartz was equally brilliant. He blitzed rarely, but always effectively. He rotated personnel to get the most from his defensive line. A full 42 percent of Atlanta's offensive plays went for zero yards or a loss.

And Schwartz certainly had his team prepared at crunch time. As Matt Ryan lined up his offense to win it — 4th-and-goal on the 2 with 1:05 to go — every Birds defender recognized the formation and knew what was coming.

"It was headed my way," CB Jaylen Mills said afterward. "I knew it because Jim showed it to us in the film room 100 times."

Sure enough, Falcons All-Pro WR Julio Jones ran right at Mills, slipped, got pushed in the back by Mills, and then ... let's give the call to Merrill Reese:

"Ryan rolls ... Ryan pumps ... Ryan is throwing it up in the air ... INCOMPLETE!"

A season was saved in large part because of homework. Yes, the sexy storyline may be us vs. the non-believers, but this is a smart, mature, talented team that earned this spot in the title game. Hey, a record of 14-3 is no fluke.

So now it's the Vikings, fresh off their miracle victory over New Orleans. You'll hear all this week about the stingiest defense in the league (ignoring that the Eagles shut down the run better than anyone). You'll be warned about Adam Thielen and Stefon Diggs, apparently the most-dangerous duo of WRs since Swann and Stallworth.

And you'll be told that Minnesota's vagabond starting QB, Case Keenum, is that much better than Nick Foles. I don't really see the edge there.

If it all fuels Eagles players for another week, so much the better.

But here's the thing: There's a team in South Philadelphia talented and well coached enough to advance another game. If they can avoid dumb mistakes (oh, those fumbles and missed extra points), the dog masks get to make one more appearance heading into the Super Bowl.

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Sixers raw talent, pure shooting lifts them to win over Raptors

The Sixers almost blew another huge lead, but hung on and beat the second best team in the East on Monday.

EVAN MACY
evan.macy@metro.us

Think having a short memory is key to being a pro athlete?

The Sixers have blown some pretty big leads of late — most notably in London last week — and their downfall has come in the third quarter.

But instead of blowing a 22-point lead, like the did across the pond, the Sixers built one Monday against the 29-13 Raptors (second best record in the East) into a 21 point cushion late in the third. And despite a furious comeback effort by Toronto, the Sixers prevailed 117-111. Fueled by a monster afternoon from Joel Embiid — 34 points and 11 rebounds — the 76ers got back to 20-20 and in the thick of the playoff race once again.

Shooting 50 percent from the field was a big boost despite shooting a dreary 24 percent from three, as was a career-high output from T.J. McConnell (18 points with eight assists to boot). J.J Redick chipped in with 15.

Before Brett Brown's usual rotation substitutions took effect, Ben Simmons and Joel Embiid had combined to score all of the Sixers' 20 points through the game's first eight minutes.

The battle between Embiid and Jonas Valanciunas took center stage, as a dunk on Embiid by the Raptors' big man fueled a trio of Embiid fadeaways including a three-point play (for seven straight Jo-Jo buckets). He would collect 18 points in the first 24 minutes.

The crowd rose to its feet later in the second, after a brief shoving match between McConnell and Demar Derozen (and even more vocal when no technical foul was called). The Sixers held tough but a mini Toronto 6-0 spurt at the end of that period had the count 59-49 at the half. By games end, Simmons and Kyle Lowry had been tossed for some harsh words exchanged at center court in the fourth quarter in what was a fully feisty game between the division rivals.

Philly held its own in the third, building to an 18-point lead entering the last frame but the Raptors didn't make it easy, getting inside six points midway through.

A three-pointer drilled by Delon Wright near the three-minute mark chipped the lead to just three points and a Derozan jumper to just one as fans feared yet another missed opportunity was upon them. But a Simmons layup and Saric three back-to-back put things back to a six-point spread.

Joel Embiid's 34 points and 11 rebounds led the Sixers in both categories Monday. GETTY IMAGES

Hack-a-Simmons started again at the 1:44 mark, with the rookie drilling a pair of free throws to keep the lead at six (he would go for 12 total). A C.J. Miles layout, after a Kyle Lowry three and Sixers turnover had the Raptors back by three with 36 seconds to play. Embiid made a pair as well, with 25 second left, to give Philly a two-possession lead, 113-108.

In the impressive win, six Sixers players scored in double figures as the team overcame 21 turnovers (they were worst in the NBA heading into Monday averaging 17.9).

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Simmons continues run ins with Philly-bred NBA players

After near altercations with Markieff Morris and Kyle Lowry, do Philadelphia players hate Ben Simmons?

EVAN MACY
evan.macy@metro.us

Ben Simmons continues to play like the presumptive Rookie of the Year choice. GETTY IMAGES

Ben Simmons has been tested lately.

Not by opposing teams for basketball purposes, per say. Though the Celtics and Raptors have proven to be stiff competition for the Sixers over the last week.

But his temper has certainly been tested quite a bit.

In near altercations that nearly led to fights, Markieff Morris, a Boston forward last week in London, and Kyle Lowry, a Toronto guard Monday in Philly, each had some choice words for the Sixers' rookie. The latter actually led to Simmons and Lowry being tossed from Monday's Sixers victory (with just a few seconds remaining in the game, which had more or less been decided already).

"I think they're just trying to test me," the 6-foot-10 point-forward said. "I don't play around. I am not going to take s— from anybody."

Is there any pattern to the two instances? Perhaps there is, with a "Philly tough" connection.

"It's been two Philly guys, so maybe it's a Philly thing," Simmons said, noting that Lowry went to Villanova while Morris grew up in Philly before going to Kansas. "They're tough players, I am the same way, I am not going to let you push me around and say whatever you want."

The back-and-forth started earlier in the game, when T.J. McConnell refused to step down after Demar DeRozan got in his face in the first half after a small shove.

"It's basketball that kind of stuff happens," McConnell said. "I thought the shove wasn't needed but I know he had no intent behind it, he's a good guy it was some heat of the moment stuff."

In tarue Sixers' style — in the mold of the always trash-talking Joel Embiid — Simmons couldn't help but take a parting shot.

"Honestly I don't know," he said. "Maybe frustration that they're down, about to lose, I don't know what it is."

Brown explains why Sixers lead NBA in turnovers

The Sixers are really a miracle.

They have gotten barely four games from their No. 1 overall pick — who in January still can't remember how to shoot a basketball.

They have had the No. 1 toughest schedule in the entire NBA so far.

They have the second youngest roster in the entire NBA.

They lead the entire NBA in turnovers with nearly 18 per game.

And somehow they are 20-20.

"In a twisted way I like where we're at," head coach Brett Brown said Monday after a 117-111 win over the Raptors, citing that the team is already finished playing top teams like the Warriors, Raptors, Rockets and have just one more game left against the Celtics (on Thursday in Boston).

Things are bright, with Markelle Fultz eventually (hopefully) slated to return as the All-Star game approaches. But there are still those atrocious turnovers.

"I think it shows how good we can be," point guard T.J. McConnell said. "21 turnovers is ridiculously bad and obviously blowing that lead (the Sixers led by as many as 21), we have to be more mature with leads like that and continue to execute and lock up on defense and limit turnovers."

But the stats are a bit deceiving, or so says Brown.

"Turnovers are something that coaches are not proud of," Brown said. "I am a little past the fact that at times, if you want to lead the NBA in passes and you want to play fast and if you want to give a 4 the ball and call him a point guard or if you want to roll out Joel [Embiid] even though he does not practice that much, you're going to have some turnovers. It doesn't justify them, but it better explains why."

The perpetual turnovers, Brown contends, are a by-product of the Sixers style of play. Just as long rebounds are a symptom of a high-volume three-point shooting team or a team that likes to drive to the basket gets to the free throw line. It is a side-effect of the Sixers deciding to play an uptempo style with some immature players. And yet, Philadelphia is just two games out of the Eastern Conference Playoffs bracket.

"We need to reduce them but at the same time I don't want these guys playing scared," Brown said. "I want them playing smart. We don't walk up the floor, and at times it comes with some pain."

EVAN MACY

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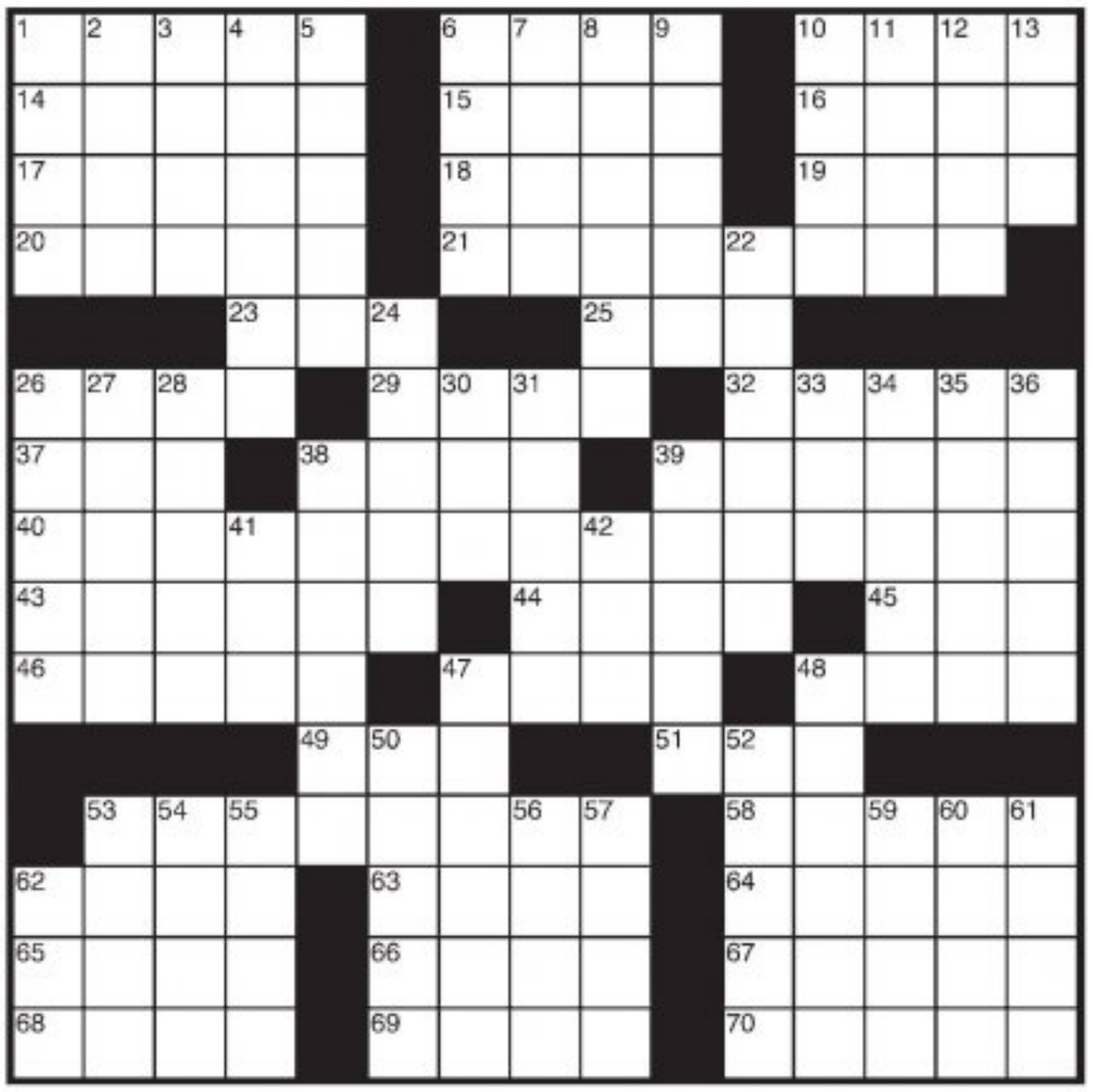

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hard

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Cancer The way you handle your relationships with others and the contributions you make to people who have much to offer you in return will be rewarding.

Leo Fixing up your surroundings or investing in something that you want but don't need will leave you in a financial mess. Moderation should be practiced. Only buy what you need.

Virgo Spend more time on yourself. A healthy lifestyle, bit of relaxation or an update to your look will give you the boost you need to step into the future with optimism.

Libra Start a hobby, join a gym or do whatever it takes to ease everyday stress. Keep the peace at home and protect against physical, emotional or verbal abuse. Take precautions.

Scorpio Put some muscle behind your goals. Intelligence and fortitude will bring about the changes you desire. If you live your dream, you won't be disappointed.

Sagittarius A change to the way you earn your keep may be desired, but before you leave one position, make sure you have a better job to go to. Don't make rash decisions.

Capricorn If you share your feelings, you will get more accomplished. No one can help you if you aren't open about what you need others to contribute. Ask and you shall receive.

Aquarius Look for stable investments. Take the initiative to find out all you can without revealing too much about your plans, personal information or ideas.

Pisces Your insight will lead to wise choices. Financial gain is heading your way. Negotiate on your own behalf. Don't be afraid to ask for more. **EUGENIA LAST**

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If so, please call Hassman Research Institute about participating in our research study of an investigational drug for adults with treatment-resistant depression.

Qualified participants must: • Be 18 or older • Be taking prescribed antidepressant medication • Be currently experiencing a depressive episode

Insurance is not required to participate in our study, and all study-related care and study medications are provided at no charge.

Transportation and compensation up to $7,500 for time and travel may be available.

HASSMAN RESEARCH INSTITUTE

For more information, call toll-free 866-264-4545 or visit HRITrials.com

www.metro.us